

**REMARKS**

Claims 7 and 9-12 are pending in the subject application. Claims 7-12 stand rejected. By way of the above amendments, claim 7 has been amended and claim 8 has been canceled. Support for amended claim 7 can be found throughout the specification. Favorable reconsideration of the application and allowance of all of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 7 and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,814,349 to Gues et al. (“Gues”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,103,181 to Berger; while claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gues in view of Berger and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,411,693 to Wust, Jr. (“Wust”) and U.S. Patent No. 5,700,491 to Herwegh et al. (“Herwegh”). The rejection of claim 8 is moot in view of the cancellation of this claim. Applicants respectfully traverse the remaining rejections based upon the following remarks.

Initially, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of original claim 7 is patentable over the combination of Gues and Berger and/or any other combination of the cited references. However, in an effort to achieve a U.S. patent as quickly as possible, Applicants have amended claim 7 to include further limitations similar in subject matter to canceled claim 8. In addition, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of original claim 7 in a continuation application.

Amended claim 7 recites a method of forming a non-woven web of fibers utilizing a system including a spin beam assembly, and a quenching chamber in communication with a drawing chamber, wherein the system maintains an enclosed environment between the spin beam assembly, the quenching chamber and the drawing chamber to prevent uncontrolled gas currents from entering the enclosed environment. In particular, claim 7 recites the following method steps: (a) delivering a plurality of polymer streams from the spin beam assembly to spinneret orifices, wherein at least two of the polymer streams include differing polymer components, and the polymer streams including differing polymer components are segregated and are independently maintained at different temperatures at least prior to delivery to the spinneret

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orifices; (b) extruding the plurality of polymer streams through the spinneret orifices to form a plurality of filaments; (c) quenching the extruded filaments by contacting the filaments with a gas stream in the quenching chamber; (d) drawing the quenched filaments in the drawing chamber; and (e) depositing the drawn filaments onto a forming surface to form a non-woven fibrous web on the forming surface. No combination of Gues, Berger, Wust and/or Herwegh anticipates or renders obvious the combined features of amended claim 7.

While Geus and Berger teach methods of extruding fibers and forming spun-bond webs of fibers, neither of these references discloses or suggests the feature of segregating polymer streams including differing polymer components and independently maintaining such segregated polymer streams at different temperatures at least prior to delivery to the spinneret orifices as recited in claim 7. In fact, Geus fails to even disclose or suggest the feature of forming polymer streams including differing polymer components.

The Examiner appears to acknowledge the deficiencies of Geus and Berger with respect to the feature of segregating and independently maintaining polymer streams with different polymer components at different temperatures, since claim 8 (which includes similar subject matter as amended claim 7) was rejected based upon a combination of Geus and Berger in further view of Wust and Herwegh. However, it is respectfully submitted that both Wust and Herwegh fail to account for the deficiencies in Geus and Berger with regard to the recited segregation and independent maintaining of different temperatures of the polymer streams with differing polymer components.

As noted by the Examiner, Wust teaches making multi-component fibers by feeding a first polymeric component at a first melt temperature into a spin pack assembly, feeding a second polymeric component at a second melt temperature into the spin pack assembly, and combining the first and second polymeric components into a multi-component configuration by extruding through a spinneret to form multi-component fiber filaments (see Col. 3, lines 32-46 of Wust). However, there is no teaching in Wust of segregating the first and second polymeric components within the spin pack and independently maintaining the polymeric components at separate temperatures at least prior to delivery to the spinneret orifices as recited in claim 7.


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Herwegh teaches a spin beam including melt lines 3 and a heating medium that heats the melt lines within the spin beam, where the melt lines 3 deliver molten polymer streams to a spinneret unit 2 (see Col. 3, lines 5-8 of Herwegh). In other words, Herwegh simply teaches heating of melt lines within a spin beam. There is no teaching in Herwegh of segregating polymer streams including different polymer components and independently maintaining the segregated streams at different temperatures at least prior to delivery to spinneret orifices as recited in claim 7. At best, Herwegh may heat the melt lines 3 via the heating medium to the same temperature, since there is no indication that any of the melt lines are segregated in any manner from each other to facilitate independent maintaining of different polymer streams at different temperatures within the spin beam.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to find the application to be in condition for allowance with claims 7 and 9-12. However, if for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney to discuss any unresolved issues and to expedite the disposition of the application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time that may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 05-0460.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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